

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 114225

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 114225

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION ADDIS ABABA, INFO BUJUMBURA, USUN,
KINSHASA, KIGALI, DAR ES SALAAM, GENEVA, LAGOS, JUNE 12,
ALSO RPTD ROME JUNE 19, FROM SECSTATE RPTD TO YOU:

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 114225

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, OAU, BY

SUBJECT: BURUNDI PROBLEM AND THE OAU

REF: (A) BUJUMBURA 577; (B) DAR ES SALAAM 2005;

(C) STATE 112489; (D) ADDIS 6802; (E) STATE 112683

1. REPEATING REFTELS A, B, AND C AND OTHERS WHICH WERE
NOT ORIGINALLY SENT TO ADDIS.

2. IN VIEW OF URGENCY SURROUNDING LATEST FLARE UP OF
HUTU- TUTSI CONFLICT AND EKANGAKI' S STANDING INVITATION
TO CONTACT HIM (REF D), DEPT WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR RAISING
BURUNDI PROBLEM WITH OAU SECRETARY GENERAL AS SOON AS
POSSIBLE. IF YOU WOULD PREFER COMBINE YOUR APPROACH WITH
OTHER TOPIC, PLEASE ADVISE.

3. BACKGROUND: IN EARLY MAY, HUTU REFUGEES INVADED
BURUNDI FROM TANZANIA AND RWANDA IN FAIRLY WELL- COORDINATED
ATTACK WHICH INITIALLY OVERWHELMED DEFENDING TUTSI ARMY
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PAGE 02 STATE 114225

UNITS. HUTU INVADERS WERE DRIVEN OUT AFTER INFLECTING CASUALTIES AND OBTAINING ARMS AND UNIFORMS, GIVING THEM A PERMANENT INSURGENCY CAPABILITY. GOVT FORCES ARE CURRENTLY MOPPING UP AREAS IN SOUTHERN BURUNDI INFESTED BY INVADERS. IN OTHER PARTS OF BURUNDI, TUTSI LEADERSHIP HAS REACTED TO ETHNIC THREAT BY ARMING CIVILIANS AND CARRYING OUT REPRISALS AGAINST HUTUS. REPRISALS ARE SO FAR ON TINY SCALE COMPARED TO 1972 TRAGEDY, BUT LARGE NUMBER OF HUTU REFUGEES ARE AGAIN STREAMING OUT OF BURUNDI, MOSTLY INTO TANZANIA. AS EMBASSY ADDIS AWARE, ACTION AT MAY OAU SUMMIT CONFINED TO MUTUAL ACCUSATIONS BY BURUNDI AND RWANDA AND REFERRAL TO OAU BUREAU HEADED BY GOWON. HOWEVER, NO SUMMIT ATTENTION PAID TO THE HUTU-TUTSI ETHNIC CONFLICT ITSELF. TANZANIA AND RWANDA ARE DETERMINED TO REMOVE REFUGEES FROM BORDER AREAS TO AVOID FUTURE INCURSIONS, BUT ZAIRE MAY FIND THIS ECONOMICALLY NOT FEASIBLE.

3. IN YOUR DISCUSSION OF BURUNDI PROBLEM WITH EKANGAKI, YOU SHOULD MAKE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

(A) SHORTLY AFTER 1972 TRAGEDY BEGAN TO UNFOLD IN BURUNDI, WE ARRANGED FOR FACTS OF SITUATION TO BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE THEN OAU PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH, FORMER OAU SECRETARY GENERAL DIALLO TELL, ZAIRE PRESIDENT MOBUTU, THE EMPEROR, AND TANZANIAN PRESIDENT NYERERE. AT THE SAME TIME WE URGED THAT PRESSURE BE BROUGHT TO BEAR ON THE MICOMBERO REGIME TO REFRAIN FROM ETHNIC REPRISALS AGAINST INNOCENT HUTUS. WHILE MOBUTU AND NYERERE MADE CAUTIOUS APPROACHES TO MICOMBERO, AND HALTED MILITARY ASSISTANCE THAT HAD BEEN PROVIDED DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF THE TRAGEDY, THE OVERALL REACTION OF THE OAU LEADERSHIP WAS TO REFRAIN FROM INTERFERING IN WHAT WAS CONSIDERED AN INTERNAL BURUNDI PROBLEM.

(B) INCURSIONS BY ARMED HUTU REFUGEES IN MAY 1973 HAVE AGAIN TRIGGERED REPRISALS WHICH HAVE IN TURN GENERATED THOUSANDS OF ADDITIONAL REFUGEES.

(C) AS AN IMMEDIATE STEP, WE WOULD HOPE THAT THE OAU
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 114225

COULD URGE THE MICOMBERO GOVT TO REFRAIN FROM FURTHER REPRISALS NOW THAT THE INVADERS HAVE APPARENTLY BEEN DRIVEN OUT, AND TANZANIA AND RWANDA HAVE AGREED TO REMOVE REFUGEE CAMPS FROM BORDER AREAS.

(D) FOR THE LONGER TERM, WE FEEL THAT THE OAU SHOULD COME TO GRIPS WITH THE POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THE HUTU-

TUTSI CONFLICT OF SURVIVAL. INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE PROBLEM JUSTIFIED NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF LATEST DEVELOPMENTS, BUT ALSO ON GROUNDS IT IS IN THE COLLECTIVE INTEREST OF AFRICANS TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM WHICH IS SPILLING OVER BORDERS AND INVITING OUTSIDE INTERVENTION.

(E) OAU CONTINUED FAILURE TO CONSIDER BURUNDI'S INTERNAL HUTU- TUTSI CONFLICT AS A SERIOUS PROBLEM FOR ALL OF AFRICA CAN ONLY DAMAGE AFRICA'S CREDIBILITY IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

(F) IN OUR VIEW, THE FIRST STEP IN ANY SOLUTION IS TO PERSUADE THE BURUNDI GOVT THAT THE EXISTENCE OF A PROBLEM SHOULD BE ACKNOWLEDGED, AND THAT INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE IS REQUIRED IN THE SEARCH FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION. IT APPEARS TO US THAT THE LONG- TERM SURVIVAL OF THE TUTSIS AS A MINORITY RACE IN BURUNDI CAN BE GUARANTEED ONLY IN AN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT.

4. PLEASE REPEAT FURTHER EXCHANGES ON THIS SUBJECT TO INFO ADDRESSEES OF THIS MESSAGE. RUSH
UNQUOTE ROGERS UNQUOTE. ROGERS

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